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PRESS CONFERENCE BY
THE HONORABLE HENRY A. KISSINGER
SECRETARY OF STATE
NATO HEADQUARTERS, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM
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SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS: Gentlemen, first of all I want just to say that the Secretary of State has a meeting before he leaves rather soon to be in Washington early in the evening tonight, so his time is very short. He has come from Bonn, and I have had the pleasure and the privilege of accompanying him so that we could have very informal and pleasant exchanges of views on various problems. The Secretary of State has now very detailedly briefed in a restricted meeting the NATO Council on the developments in the Middle East and problems which affect the Alliance. I am not here on my part to give you the views of the Secretary of State. We have the great pleasure of having him here, and I will now give him the floor so that he can give you exactly what he would like to say. I would only add that it was a very useful meeting, that the Secretary of State went into all the questions asked, and it was a very lively and pleasant exchange of views.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Mr. Secretary General, Ladies and Gentlemen. I came here at the request of our President to brief the members of the Council, first, about my trip to the Middle East and second, on the general design of our policy in the Middle East so that our allies would understand and be able to express their views with respect to our policy in an area that is of vital concern to them. I also welcomed the opportunity to exchange views with the Secretary General on the plane and explain to him and his colleagues about the evolution of Atlantic relationships which we believe should be even further strengthened and which the United States considers to be the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

I will be glad to take a few questions, but please remember that I have not even had the opportunity yet to report to our President on my trip. Therefore, I will not be very illuminating about the Middle East.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, is there a complete unity of views between our allies and the United States over our Middle East policy?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I really don't think that I should speak for our allies. My impression — which, of course, the Secretary General can also comment on — was that around the table in the NATO Council there was a considerable unity of views as to the objectives and considerable understanding as to the method. I do not recall that any contrary views were expressed. Am I unfair, Mr. Secretary General?

SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS: No, no. You are quite right, but you are too modest about it. There was on the part of all the countries of the Alliance great appreciation for what the United States in the person of

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its Secretary of State has been doing in the Middle East since November last when the first talks started. We have been somewhat encouraged by the prospect of going step by step further in the direction of a peace which will be in the interest of all the members.

QUESTION: Are you aware of the fact that the nine Ministers of the European Economic Community have decided to go ahead and conduct preliminary negotiations with 20 Arab countries with the eventual view of holding a formal [inaudible] conference this fall? One, are you aware of this? Two, does this European initiative have American understanding, perhaps even approval? And three, are you planning to see Mr. Scheel as has been advertised this afternoon?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Foreign Minister Scheel, with whom I spent last evening in an extensive review of the situation, has requested that I see him at the German Embassy here in his capacity as Head of the Council of Ministers. On that occasion he wishes to inform me about some decisions taken by the Council of Ministers, but I have not been told with respect to what subjects. Therefore, I believe it would be inappropriate for me to comment on something on which I will hear an explanation in the very near future. I am expecting to see Foreign Minister Scheel at 5:00 at the German Embassy at his request.

QUESTION: In the past you have had views about this separate European effort with these Arab oil-producing countries. Is this a question you are dealing with in general at the Foreign Ministers level?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: It would be hardly proper for me to comment on something I have not been officially informed of and the content of which I do not know. Our view at the Washington Energy Conference concerned bilateral oil deals between different countries or regions and oil-producing countries. It does not apply to the whole spectrum of positive relationships in which we obviously do not ask for a veto, but I would like to wait for official information before expressing the view on what it is that the European Community may have decided today.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, is there anything new about the new Atlantic Charter and Mr. Nixon coming here to Brussels?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We are making good progress in the drafting of the NATO Declaration and there will be another meeting in the middle of March of the political directors or their equivalents in which we intend to make progress on the Declaration between the Community and the United States. The tentative plan had always been that if these declarations are satisfactorily concluded, the President might come to Europe to sign them. But we will wait with making the final decision until they are concluded. I can say, however, that with respect to the Atlantic Declaration very good progress has been made and, with respect to the Declaration with the Community, we are quite optimistic.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, are you counting on Spain signing this new Atlantic Declaration?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Spain is not formally included in the Atlantic Declaration. However, as I explained to the press when I was in Spain a few months ago, the United States is prepared to sign a separate declaration with Spain which will parallel those it signs with the other countries of Europe. We are, in fact, at this moment engaged in an exchange of views with the Spanish Government on this subject, and we are certain that we will achieve a satisfactory answer.

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QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, is it still the American intention to ask for a third document which would include, for example, Japan in the process?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The United States supports a statement between Europe, the United States and Japan and this is the subject of consultations which are now taking place.

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